



Guidelines for the creation of new Graduate Certificate proposals at Algoma University

Approved by the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee on May 16, 2019

The Senate-approved definition of Graduate Certificate at Algoma University is: *a structured set of 30 credits in a particular discipline or area of study that introduces a student to, or extends their knowledge of, that discipline or area of study. A graduate certificate is a stand-alone credential comprised of undergraduate courses that are taken independent from a bachelor's program. It is normally comprised of a structured set of sequential year-level courses and requires a post-secondary credential for admission.*

The following are meant to offer several recommended preliminary design principles that faculty should consider prior to completion of the New Program Concept Summary. These are some of the risks that may result if consistent and collaborative design principles are not followed:

- Departments proposing several partially-overlapping certificates could create intra-program, inter-certificate competition for students
- New graduate certificates may not address the actual needs of students or market demand, resulting in low/no interest or dissatisfied students
- Proposals for multiple new graduate certificates may create significant resource and delivery challenges for small departments
- Lack of process knowledge may result in needless work being done by departments, resulting in inefficient results, wasted time and resources and frustration among faculty and staff

The following preliminary design principles are intended to assist faculty in thinking about Graduate Certificates:

	Recommended preliminary design principles
1	Quality over quantity. Optimally, Algoma University will offer a small number of graduate certificates that realistically address in a targeted manner students' needs and market demand. Instead of trying to flood the market with a large number of graduate certificates covering every possible permutation of likely scenarios, it is better to work smart and offer a few excellent ones that attract significant student numbers.
2	Take an institutional view and focus primarily on student needs. Please make use of existing courses in your program and in other related programs at Algoma

	University. Our goal is to address student needs and market demand in the most diverse, interdisciplinary and financially efficient manner. Please do not duplicate courses that exist in other programs. Instead, work with those programs and include their courses in a collaboratively-designed graduate certificate proposal.
3	Be fiscally responsible. If you wish to create new courses, please consider carefully whether you could withdraw/bank an equivalent number of existing undersubscribed courses. This will make your proposed graduate certificate neutral costwise and more likely to be approved by regulatory bodies at Algoma University.
4	Simple is beautiful and effective. Adding further variations of your degree and graduate certificates may be ineffective and costly in terms of delivery and may create confusion in your target student population over having too many choices. AU cannot be everything to everyone.
5	Be receptive, flexible and consultative. Getting early, broad feedback on your proposed idea for a graduate certificate will result in a better end product and may help avoid unnecessary work.

	Procedures
1	Please consider market research to demonstrate student need and demand for your proposed graduate certificate. The best source for Algoma relevant market information is the semi-annual report (spring and fall) compiled by the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Committee that shall indicate current market demand. Reliable market information to support your proposal is more likely to lead to a successful outcome.
2	If the SEM semi-annual report information supports your idea, please follow our new program introduction process as outlined in the IQAP document. If in doubt, please ask for clarification, as often as needed, from the Quality Assurance Office.
3	If you are proposing a new graduate certificate, please follow these steps in sequence: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>New Program Concept Summary</i> Template development/approval process: Department (proposer), Faculty (endorsement), Academic Planning and Priorities Committee (approval) --per IQAP 1.5, Stage 2 b) <i>New Program Proposal</i> Template approval process: Department, Faculty, Quality Assurance Committee, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee and Senate approvals --per IQAP 1.5, Stage 3
4	If you are making changes to an existing graduate certificate, please follow the scenario below that applies to your situation:

	<p>a) Revised Program Template approval process for major modifications: Department, Faculty, Quality Assurance Committee, Academic Planning and Priorities Committee and Senate approvals</p> <p>b) Revised Program Template approval process for minor modifications: Department, Faculty, Curriculum Committee and Senate approvals. Minor modifications are not dealt with by the Quality Assurance Committee</p>
5	<p>Conversion of an existing certificate to a graduate certificate is considered a new program and not a program revision. Please follow step 4 above.</p>